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WASHINGTON, D. C.

SPEECH OF WILLIAM H. SEWARD

ON THE CENTRAL AMERICAN QUESTION.

In the Senate of the United States, January 31, 1856. Ma PRESIDENT: I desire to concentrate the attention of th Senate and of the country upon the Central American Question. Therefore I pass over the controversy about Mr. Crampton's violation o our neutrality laws, as I do the more general topic of the Monroe doctrine, both of which sub-

jects have been elaborately discussed by the Sen ator from Michigan.

The President of the United States has caus our case to be fully and ably presented, and Great Britain has explicitly refused to comply with our demands. It belongs now to Congress to deterine the course which the country shall pursu It is necessary, therefore, to review our position If it is right, we cannot recede without dishonor never to be incurred. If it is wrong, we canno recede too soon. If we shall not recede, we may involve our country in no common war-an evi to be avoided if possible, consistently with duty I shall therefore take care not to say, consciously anything that might tend to inflame our own

country, or to exasperate Great Britain. it is no question of persons or of parties, nor i it even a domestic question. Therefore, I shall refrain now, as I did when I spake to it before, from bringing any personal or partisan or do-mestic subject into the debate, no matter who shall invite or who shall provoke to such a

Speaking geograpically, Central America i situated on the Isthmus which unites the two Continents of North America and South America, and extends from the southern border of Mexico to the northern boundary of New Grenada; and it spreads from that part of the Atlantic Ocean which is called the Caribbean Sea, to the shore of the Pacific Ocean. Speaking politically, Central America is constituted by the independent States of Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. These States exclude the Balize, or British Honduras, and includthe Mosquito Coast. Central America was dis-covered by Columbus, in the service of Spain, and so, according to the law of that age, became a part of the dominion of that kingdom; the Pope having, by a previous concordat, awarded to Portugal all the regions she should discover in going eastward from the Azores, and to Spain all she should discover in going westward from that point, without knowing that the two parties pursuing their opposite courses, were ultimately to meet and conflict. This portion of the Isthmus was conquered and colonized and occupied by Spain in 1525, and became, after a time, the kingdom or vice-royalty of Guatemala. Th vice-royalty, or province, threw off the Spanish authority, and became an independent federal republic in 1823, under the name of the Republic of Central America. In 1839, the five State which I have already named, and which constituted the Republic, dissolved their politics union, and each assumed absolute independence They have an aggregate population of about two
millions—one twelfth whites, four twelfths mixed,
and the residue Indians.

The acquisition of California by the United States

in 1848, the disclosure of its immense mineral wealth, and the consequent political organization and social development of that State, precipitated upon them and on the world the solution of that great problem of a communication across the Isthmus, between the two Oceans, which had been studied without practical result three hun-dred and fifty years. Such a passage, while it would be beneficial to all nations, was in lispen-sable to the United States, because California was practically inaccessible from the Atlantic States for the purposes of commerce and defence The United States had sympathized with all the Spanish American States in their revolutions, and had extended to them favorable commercial treaties. In 1823, the President, Mr. Monroe, after grave consideration, had announced to the world, as a postulate, that "the American Continents, by the free and independent condition

ture colonization by any European Power." But the United States had, nevertheless, always declined, although often urgently invited and invoked, to interfere in the political affairs of those

citizens of the United States, grandultract with exclusive right to construct a canal or railway, from ocean to ocean, through the River San Juan and the Lake Nicaragua. On the 21st of June, 1849, Nicaragua tendered to the United States a reaty, offering them peculiar and distinguishing cantages connected with that undertaking, on that they should guaranty the sovereignth of that State. On the 10th of September, 1849, the was offered by that State of and a ted States, by which it was proposed that the passage should be open, on equal terms, to all States and Nations who should enter into the

necessary stipulations for its safety and preservation. The United States hesitated, and refrained from accepting either treaty. The subject was embarrassed by the presence and intervention of Great Britain in Central America. While Spain retained her dominion on these continents and the adjacent islands, she jealously excluded foreign Powers from commerce with her Colonies. A contraband trade consequently grew up between them and the British Colonies in this hemisphere. The British Government connived at that illicit commerce. Wars ensued. At the close of these wars, in 1783, Great Britain had a settlement, known as the Balize, or British Honluras, situate in the department or intendancy of the Mosquito Coast, forming a part of the shore of both these possessions were rehemently disputed by the Central American States. On he 10th of September, 1847, the British agent announced to the States of Nicaragua and Honduras the determination of his Government to sustain the British Protectorate on the Mosquito of Guadalupe Hidalgo (which transferred Califorships entered San Juan, and expelled the State of Nicaragua therefrom; and four days atterwards, the same force was used in taking the port of Serapaqui, on the lower branch or part of the River San Juan. Nicaragua succumbed. but protested, on the 17th of March, 1848. On the 16th of October, 1849, a British man-of-war Britain had sometimes disputed with Honduras for the Island of Ruatan, which was capable, by being fortified at a small expense, of commanding every possible passage between the two Oceans,

was negotiated and concluded. Practically, the negotiation began in an interview held at London, on the 24th of September. 1849, between Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister of Great Britain, and Mr. Rives, American Minis-

Mr. Rives stated that "the British Consul at on examination, were satisfied, as well on legal

• Ex. Doc. 75, p. 44, Vol. X, 1st Sees, 31st Cong. • Doc. 27, p. 18.

come to a frank understanding with each other, and unite to corry the undertaking into effect, as one of the highest importance to themselves and orate, why does she not expressly reserve and

The British Minister replied, that "from an early period the Mosquito Indians had been treated by the British Government as a separate and independent State; had what was called a King, who, by the way, was as much a King as you or that Nicaragua, having never before been in possession of San Juan, had taken possession of that town, and that the British had driven her away from it; that the Nicaraguans had, as Lord Palmerston alleged, in bad faith, granted to American citizens a right to open the proposed passage through a territory of which she was not in possession, and that the British Government had therefore given notice to those grantees of

its intention to regard the contract as a void me" But he added "that a suspicion seeme to be entertained by some persons in the United States, that the British Government wished to plant a new Colony on the San Juan; that there was not the slightest foundation for that suspi-cion, as Great Britain had already more Colonies than she could manage; that as to any idea of her holding exclusive possession of the mouth of the San Juan, as the key of the contemplated of the San Juan, as the key of the contemplated inter-oceanic passage, nothing could be further from her mind; and that if any plan could be suggested, by which Great Britain and the United States could unite in promoting, by their joint influence and mutual co-operation, the opening of a great channel by the way of Lake Nicaragua, and declaring it a common highway for the use and benefit of all nations, it would eceive the most favorable consideration of her

intentions concerning any inter-oceanic canal that may be constructed by the way of the River San Juan and either one or both of the Lakes of Nicaragua or Manegua. The stipulations which come most directly under review on the present ecasion are-

ART. I. Neither party will ever obtain or maintain fo Agr. I. Neither party will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the contemplated canal. Neither will ever erector maintain any forthication commanding the same or the vicinity thereof.

Neither will occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or assume or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America.

Neither will use any protection which either affords or may afford, or any alliance which either has or may have, to or with any State or People, for the purpose of erecting or maintaining any such torthications, or of occupying or colonizing Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America, or of assuming of exercising any dominion over the same.

Neither will take advantage of any intimacy or use any alliance, connection, or influence, that either may possess

company, arready existing, as may have a contract which is justly mobjectionable to the parties.

ART. VIII. The parties declare that, besides the particular purpose of the treaty before stated, they have the further and broader object to establish a general principle; and so they agree to extend their protection, by treaty stapulations, to any other practicable communications, whether by canal or railway, across the lathmus, and especially to those contemplated to be made by the and especially to those contemplated to be made by the ways of Tehuantepec and Panama.

It was a great treaty, sublime in its concep-

family, after long and angry alienation, met, not within the territory of either, but on that foreign gion is too transparent to conceal the features of and narrow Isthmus which, while it unites
North and South America, divides the vigorous
Atlantic States of Europe and America from the atic nations which on opposite coasts overlook the broad Pacific, the last remaining one of the barriers which Nature had erected to hinder the restoration of the unity of the human race. How were they changed since they had last met in conflict! The elder had grown richer, stronger, sages were discussed: One by the way of Te-hantepec, in Mexico; one by the way of San Juan and Lake Nicarsgua, understood to be within the State of Nicarsgua. within the State of Nicaragua; and one by the way of Chagres, in New Grenada. The citizens and the Government of the United State of State and the Government of the United States applied themselves to obtain the opening of all these process. On the 14th of March, 1849, the State of Nicaragua and States applied themselves to obtain the opening of all these process. On the 14th of March, 1849, the State of Nicaragua and States applied to the state of States of States of States applied to the state of the state the newer nations of the West. They met on dominion over strait not to contend together for seize and divide an exclusive strait or together to to make it free to each other, and equally to make it free to each other, and equally heal mankind. They met in the presence of the feeble and contentious Republics which the influence of their own institutions had perhaps too soon organized out of the ruins of Spanish desgret those Republics, and seize the domains which they could not held. that State. On the conditions and a was offered by that State to the Unitary could not hold, but to fortify them, and guaranty their possessions to them forever. It is not the present, but the future, that stamps upon human transactions their true and lasting character. Higher than the fame of Agincourt, of Saratoga, of Waterloo, or of Buena Vista, shall be the glory of that conjunction of Great Britain and America, on the heights that command the repose of the world. The truce they made there was not effected without mutual self-denial, acquired under the discipline of free government. Great Britain repressed a constitutional ambition that had long convulsed the world. The United States subdued one that Nature prompted, and the voice of mankind applauded and encouraged. Let not that sacred truce be broken, and these friendly Powers engage in deadly strife and discord, and violence be thus let loose, to arrest the progress of the nations. Better for the pride of

each, that the white cliffs that garrison the coast of England sink into a black and pestilential morass, and that Niagara lose forever its deep-toned voice, and ooze through a vulgar channel to the sea, than that the great and sonorous cone rd thus established between them be rudely bro en. I counsel you. Senators and statesmen of the United States, by all the motives that are born in the love of such a land as ours, in such an age Coast, from Cape Honduras to and including the lower part of the River San Juan.* On the 8th of Great Britain, by all the motives that greatness uary, 1848, only six days after the treaty and ambition like her own will not permit to be inactive, to preserve and maintain, at all costs nia to the United States) was signed, two British and hazards, and through all discontents and

by after-coming deluge of human passions. I shall examine first the question concerning captured Tigre Island, off the Pacific Coast, but that Great Britain is bound by the treaty to withthe Mosquito Coast. The United States insist donging to Nicaragua. At the same time, Great draw from that district. Great Britain denies

any the nations shall not again be overwhelmed

and natural effect of the language contained in the treaty. Its stipulations are, that Great Britthrough Central America. Costa Rica, disputing with Nicaragua the boundary of the San Juan, was understood to favor Great Britain; Honduras, Cautimaal and Nicaragua invoked the aid of the It was under these circumstances that the not take hold upon and terminate any occupation that the stipulations are only prospective, and do treaty of 1850, called sometimes the Clayton and or colony or dominion of hers which is existing Bulwer treaty, or the Central American treaty, at the time when the treaty is concluded. She argues that such an effect is merely inferential; whereas, if it had been intended, it would have been embodied in the form of an express renun-

ciation. rest in an inference only, but is explicitly expressed. The treaty is very brief. It grasps many New York had publicly claimed for the Mosquito Britain, of the Mosquito Nation, of the Balize Indians sovereignty and ownership over the Colony, of Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and mouth and lower part of the River San Juan; the two other Central American States, of Mexithat the United States had now become a party co, and New Grenada, and of all friendly nations, that the United States had now become a party to the question in their own right, by virtue of the contract by which Nicaragua had granted to American citizens the right to construct an interoceanic canal, by the way of the River San Juan ever (that is to say, after this time, henceforand the Lake Nicaragua; that the United States. ward) maintain any colony or occupancy, or exercise any dominion over the Mosquito Coast. as on geographical grounds, that the State of This stipulation cannot be fully executed, unless Nicaragus was the territorial sovereign of the Great Britain shall, from this time, relinquish, River and the Lake, and that they had already discontinue, give up, retire from, and abandon, concluded, or were about concluding, a treaty whatever colony, occupation, or domain, of whatwith that State, for securing a passage; that the United States, however, sought no exclusive cises on the Mosquito Coast. A doubt may arise privilege, and sincerely wished to see the passage dedicated to the use of all nations, on the most directly maintained and exercised in the form of iberal terms, and on a footing of perfect equality a Protectorate over the Mosquito Nation, is inclufor all; that, even if they could, they would not obtain any exclusive right or privilege—and so, Great Britain repeats and specifies that she will

Mosquito Colony, occupation, and dominion, now ragua, and possibly Costa Rica. By the universal maintained and exercised in the form of a Protect-

save them?
I submit, in the next place, that if the American construction is not the true one, then the treaty is destitute of that mutuality which is inherent in all conventions, and avowed with peculiar earnestness and solemnity in this one. The United States have not, either on the Mosquito Coast or in any other part of Central America, any colony, occupation, or dominion, of any form whatever. They stipulate that they will never obtain or assume any such. Great Britain has all of these existing in the form of the Protectorate, and that constitutes the obstacle to the opening of the proposed ship canal, an object lesired by both parties. She agrees on her part that she will not only not obtain or assume any new olony, occupation, or dominion there, but she will not hereafter maintain or exercise any such that is now existing. As she has heretofore made use" of her Protectorate for the purpose of maintaining and exercising such occupancy and dominion, she agrees that she will make use of that machinery for those purposes no longer. But if the machinery is preserved at all, it must constitute now, as heretofore, a colony, an occupation, a dominion and therefore the machinery itself must cease. If the British construction is

present and nothing future, while the United States have conceded everything, equally present and future, by excluding themselves henceforward and forever from Central America. One can scarcely maintain his gravity when he finds Lord Clarendon, on the other hand, ar-Ine treaty was fully ratified on the 4th of July, 1850, but took effect from its date, April 9th, 1850. It recites the purpose of the parties, namely, to consolidate amicable relations, by setting forth and fixing their mutual views and advantages without receiving any equivalents. But it is to be remembered that the United States denied absolutely the British title to their colonies, denied absolutely the British title to their colonies, occupations, and dominions, in Central America; and, secondly, they had antagonistical rights to establish colonies, occupations, and dominions, there, by virtue of the contract and two treaties extended to them by Nicaragua, whose title they held to be paramount to that of Great Britain. To avoid this conflict between themselves, the parties agree to abandon Central America to the

States existing there, to whom it belongs.

Pressed by the American argument, Great
Britain concedes that the treaty limits and modifies her Protectorate. But she cannot stand on that ground, because the treaty specifies no limitations or modifications; and the language which confessedly works them out, equally works a complete discontinuance and abandonment of the

rotectorate herself. Lord Clarendon attempts to derive a contemporaneous exposition favorable to the British construction from the conduct of Spain and the United States previous to the treaty. Spain did not indeed remonstrate against the Protectorate during the last years of her power in America, but she had abundant occupation in defending them against her insurgent provinces. The United States did not challenge the legality of the Pro-tectorate before 1849, although invited to do so by Central America and the States of Honduras, Justimala, and Nicaragua. But then they had sequired no title and no interest which would horize their intervention. When that title and that interest were acquired, they promptly and explicitly announced to Great Britain their reconcilable opposition to her maintenance of the Protectorate

I have already given the Protest made by Mr. Rives. I give now the language of Mr. Clayton, as expressed by Mr. Lawrence: "Is Great Britain eager or willing that the question of her alleged Protectorate should be tried at the bar of the public opinion of the world? Does she believe that she can obtain credit for having undertaken it from a conviction that the Mosquitoes were competent to discharge the duties of sovereignty or is she disposed to hazard the notoriety of the tion, generous in its spirit, and beneficent in its purposes. The two rival members of the British fact that the visor of royalty which she would right of way to the Pacific, by the port of San Juan and the river of that name, or to wrest the sovereignty over that region from the rightful proprietor? In such pretensions, we trust that the United States at least will never acquiesce."* Lord Clarendon next resorts to a refinement of criticism, quite extraordinary in such a place. He refers to the stipulation by which the parties agree to invite all Powers friendly to either of them to enter into stipulations, similar to those contained in the treaty; and argues that this agreement would include the Central American States, while, if they should accept the invita-tion and sign the treaty, they would thereby, according to the American construction, renounce the territories in which they exist. The most cursory reading of the stipulation, with its context, shows that two classes of States are conlished one class, not those existing in Cenenter into stipulations similar to the presented to ty, and they are also invited to follow the example of the contracting parties, and enter into especial treaties with the second class, namely, the Cen-

tral American States. I leave this controversy of words, and, following the distinguished negotiators, I rise to the height of the great argument. Mark, I pray you, the manifest conflict of the British exposition

with itself. In his statement of the 11th of September had been intended to act upon and terminate the Protectorate, "it would have contained in specific terms a renunciation, on the part of Great Brit ain, of the possessions and rights which, up to the conclusion of the convention, she had claimed to maintain." Again, and on the same hypothesis, he writes, "the treaty would then have imposed upon Great Britain the obligation to renounce possessions and rights, without any equivalent renunciation on the part of the United States." Again, "if the Convention was intended to impose upon Great Britsin an obligation to withdraw from portions of territory occupied by it then the Government of the Central American States would, by the mere act of accession, sign away their rights to the territories in which they were situated." Once more he writes, "the Brit-ish Government neither have the wish to extend the limits of their possessions or the sphere of their influence in that quarter, nor would any British interest be promoted by doing so. But, the British Government are not prepared to contract either the one or the other.

You see at once that, in these branches of the discussion, the Protectorate is no unsubstantial, shadowy thing, but that, on the contrary, it is a political institution, having the elements of pos-

session, occupancy, and dominion.

Listen now to his Lordship, while, with equal skill, he plays upon a lower key. In his state-ment of May 2d, 1854, he writes, "It is proper that her Majesty's Government should at once state that her Majesty has never held any possessions whatever in the Mosquito country. But, al-though Great Britain held no possessions in the Mosquito country, she undoubtedly exercised a great and extensive influence over it, as the protecting ally of the Mosquito King." Again he writes, "Mr. Buchanan confounds the two conditions of a sovereignty and a protectorate, and, under this error, treats the agreement not to colonize, or occupy, or fortify, nor assume nor exercise dominion over, as an agreement not to protect. With respect to sovereignty, Great Britain never claimed, and does not now claim or hold any sovereignty over Mosquito." Here the British Protectorate dissolves into a faint and indistinct shadow, and a Mosquito Kingdom rises up be-fore us as perfect in outline and majestic in proportions as one of those graceful yet majestic structures which delight us in the Arabian Nights

I take leave to say, that we treated not with a Mosquito King and Mosquito Nation, but with her own Most Gracious Majesty and the People of Great Britain. They cannot now renounce the characters they then assumed, and substitute in their places unreal or even real parties, whom they did not then introduce.

But, in fact, there was not then, nor is there

now, either a Mosquito Kingdom or Mosquito because, by the laws of nations, there could be none. Grant, for the sake of the argument, that

there is a tribe of Mosquito Indians, and that they have a chief, who is called by others and regarded by themselves as "every inch a king"grant, that with whatever form and ceremony this cacique, and even his predecessors, through a long line, ascending beyond the discovery o America, were crowned in their own domain, or in Jamaica, by their own people or by British subjects. Still the facts are undisputed, that this Nation and their King were savages, who were obtain any exclusive right or privilege—and so, of the other hand, they would not consent to see so important a communication fall under the exclusive control of any other great commercial Power; that Mosquito possession, at the mouth of the San Juan, could be considered in no other than the same terms of Great Britain against herself.

What they Rritish possession; and he proposed light than British possession; and he proposed the argument of Great Britain against herself. that Great Britain and the United States should If she is not to relinquish and discontinue her of the independent States of Honduras and Nica-

* Senate Doc. 27, p. 19, Vol. III, 2d Sess. 32d Cong.

custom of European and American States, savage tribes, although they are permitted to exercise some municipal powers, have no actual or high Even when they have never been displaced or subdued, the sovereignty neverthe-less resides in the State or Nation which exercises directly, or derives to itself, the title acquired by European discovery. It was by this universal law that Great Britain acquired and so long maintained that sovereignty within the territory of the original United States, which she resigned to them by the treaty of Versailles in 1783. By the same law, France acquired and held that do-minion in Canada and the valuable West India Islands, which she so reluctantly transferred to Great Britain, on the fall of Quebec, in 1763. By the same law, Spain acquired that title to the Floridas, and vast regions in Louisiana and Mexico to which the United States have succeeded by blood is tainted, and they are diminishing it num-bers, like the natives of the Sandwich Islands. purchase, as well as all those extensive countries in Mexico, Central America, and South America, which have passed from under her dominion, and gone under the sway of the Spanish American

Republics. It was by the same law that Den-mark acquired her possessions in the West Indies, and that Portugal acquired Brazil; and the Emone house which is built of boards, and in this the British agent lives, together with a native, who has been selected by the British Governpire of Brazil stands now on the same title. The authority for this universal law, most apposite to the present occasion, is that of Great Britain herself, as confessed in the negotiation which led to the treaty in question. Mr. Rives reports to ment to personate a King. The British flag right, then Great Britain has conceded nothing waves over the edifice, although it is recorded that a national banner for the Mosquitoes was Mr. Clayton a conversation between himself and Lord Palmerston thus: "I concluded with sayonce prepared at London, and sent to Blewfield. They claim for this King, that their choice was ing that it resulted from this long course of universal usage and conventional practice, that actual possession was in no wise necessary to the exercise of a rightful sovereignty on Indian territory; and that although Indian tribes were ratified by a number of the chiefs or head men of the Mosquitoes, and show a certificate to that effect, bearing their marks. They claim, also, that the present King, or some one of his late predecessors, visited Jamaica, and there was invested with the robes of royalty by British subjects. The Mosquitoes are heathens. They have neither possessed of some of the attributes of a separate political existence, such as that of governing their communities by their own internal laws and also of sustaining the relations of peace and hurches nor echools, nor Ministry, Parliament, war, yet it was impossible to recognise in them a complete national independence, such as that which was claimed for the Mosquitoes, without subverting the whole fabric of public law belonging to our peculiar position, which had grown up with the general concurrence and agents of or Council. They have no army or navy, no treasury, no customs, no taxes, no revenues, no liplomatic or otherwise, with any other people

all the civilized nations of Europe."

To these remarks, Lord Palmerston replied by saying, that he "fully admitted the general doc-trine for which we contended; that it was the principle on which they conducted all their relations with the Indian tribes in Canada: but that the case of the Mosquitoes was sui generis, and stood upon its own peculiar circumstances."* But the law being universal, there can be no case sui generis. If there are any peculiar circumstances, which is denied, they are not set forth Even if there were such, yet they could not sustain an exception to the universal law.

up with the general concurrence and assent o

Lord John Russell, written on the 19th of January, 1853, with a view to its being submitted to of the Mosquito Nation cannot be pleaded against Spain and her successors, unless the recognition of it can be shown. Nor can it be pleaded by Great Britain, if she herself has recognised the paramount title of Spain and her successors. Here, you will please take notice that the Pro-tectorate neither is, nor is claimed by Great Britain to be, a modern institution. On the contra ry, it stands upon prescription. I give you the

At least, the existence of such a case in behalf

"FOREIGN OFFICE, Jan. 5, 1850. "Viscount Palmerston presents his compli-ments to Mr. Lawrence, and begs to communicate to him, for his perusal, a translation in Spanish of a letter from Mr. Chatfield, her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Guatemala, addressed the Government of Nicaragua on the 5th of September last, containing a statement of facts, showing the nature of the connection which has existed, since the middle of the sevent enth century, between Great Britain and the Mosquito

This prescriptive protectorate came under th cognizance of not only Spain, but aso Great Britain herself, when making a treaty of peace, boundaries, and commerce, in 1783.

By article sixth of that treaty, it was stipulated that British subjects "shall have the right of cutting, loading, and carrying away, logwood, in the district lying between the River Walls, or Ba-lize, and Rio Hondo"—a district hundreds of miles distant from the Mosquito Coast. "Therefore, all the English who may be dispersed in any other parts, whether on the Spanish Continent [main land] or in any of the Islands what- Mr. Webster's having advised Mr. Marcoleta, the soever dependent on the aforesaid Spansh Continent, and for whatever reason it might be, to the States of Nicaragua and Costa Rica by the without exception, shall return within the district which has been above described, in the space of struction. Mr. Webster seems only to have prowhich has been above described, in the space of eighteen months," " and for this purposs, orders shall be issued on the part of his Britanne Majes-shall be issued on the part of his Britanne Majesty."‡
The same Protectorate came again under the

review of the same high contracting parties, in and they have constantly insisted on their own, 1786, in making a further treaty. By article first, it was stipulated as follows: "His Britannic Majesty's subjects, and the other colonists who have hitherto enjoyed the protection of England, shall evacuate the country of the Mosquitoes, as well as the Continent in general, and the Islands adline, without exception, situated beyond the his Catholic Males extent of territory granted by specified in the third arms English, for the mes ention, and in addition to the eg present conto them, in virtue of the stipulations agreed upon by the commissioners of the two Crowns in 1785." The line specified a the other articles of the treaty, as the boundaries of the special possession of the English, were the Rio Hondo on the north, and the River Sibun on the south, together with "the small Island of Casino, St. George's Key," or Cayo Casino, and "the clur-ter of small Islands which are situated or site that part of the Coast occupied by the atters, at that part of the Coast occupied by the River Sithe distance of eight leagues from the River Sibun, a place which has all the been found well adapted to that repose. By article seventh, all the stipulations of the treaty of 1783, for reall the scipulations of the treaty of 1783, for re-cognising the sovereignty of Spain over even ted possession, were renewed and confirmed, with new and more stringent restrictions. 6 By article second, his Britannic Majesty agreed that, "should there still remain any persons so daring as to presume, by retiring into the interior country, to endeavor to obstruct the entire evacuation already agreed upon, his Britannic Majes-ty, so far from affording them the least succor, or even protection, will disown them in the most solemn manner, as he will equally do those who may hereafter attempt to settle upon the territory belonging to the Spanish domain. By article fourteenth, it was stipulated as fol-

upon the frontier of the Spanish possessions."

This treaty was made the ground of a motion

abandonment of the Mosquito nation, the allies

treaty, on the ground that the British settlement

lawful settlement, and that the Mosquitc nation were not allies, and therefore Great Britain was not bound to protect them; and the vote of cen-

sure was refused, by a large majority of the

before described.

such an impossible Kingdom or King.

‡ Senate Doc. 75, Vol. X, p. 16.

| Senate Doc. 75, Vol. X, p. 21. | Senate Doc. 75, Vol. X, p. 23.

Senate Doc. 75, Vol X, p. 23.

* Senate Doc. 27, p. 22, Vol. III, 2d Sess. 32d Cong.

the Mosquito shore was not a regular and

lows: "His Catholic Majesty, prompted solely by motives of humanity, promises to the King of England that he will not again exercise any act of severity against the Mosquitoes inhabiting in part the countries which are to be evacuated by virtue of the present convention, on account of the connections which may have subsisted between the said Indians and the English; and his Britannic Majesty, on his part, will strictly pro-hibit all his subjects from furnishing arms or warlike stores to the Indians in general, situated her pretensions to absolute sovereignty within that district. for a vote of censure in the British House of Lords, in 1787, and was denounced as being a humiliating surrender of the Mosquito country and of Great Britain. The Ministry defended the

commercial, not a political transaction.

Peers. Thus the matter remained, so far as trea-ties or laws were concerned, until 1812, when Spain adopted a new and written Constitution, Lord Clarendon further sustains these usurpain defiance of the despotic Powers of Europe That Constitution contained this article: "Guate tions, by alleging that the treaty of 1788 was ab-rogated in 1814, by a war between Great Britain mala, with the internal provinces of the East and and Spain, at which time the Balize settlement West, and the adjacent islands in both seas, form had been already extended to the Sarstown. But part of the Spanish dominions." Great Britain recognised Spain under this Constitution, and Great Britain was, during that war, as well as before it, occupying the Balize, in subordination guarantied her sovereignty. Guatemala threw to the Spanish title. She did not effect nor even off the Spanish yoke in 1823, and became a conallege a change in the nature or extent of her federated Republic. Its Constitution thus described the domain which it covered. "The termade no treaty of boundaries, and took no politiritory of the Republic is the same which for-merly comprehended the ancient Kingdom of cal stipulations whatever : but, on the contrary, merly comprehended the ancient Kingdom of Guatemala, with the exception for the present of Chiapas." This territory included the whole of the Mosquito Coast. The special and limited British settlement between the Rio Hondo and the Silver, (called the Balize,) belonging within the Spanish province of Yucatan, and by the revolution passed under the sway of Mexico. entered into a treaty which expressly revived all formerly existing commercial treaties—to which class the treaty of 1786, so far as the Balize district or settlement was concerned, manifestly belonged. Great Britain continued to act on this ground until the question of inter-oceanic passages across the Isthmus arose. In 1817, the British Great Britain acknowledged the independence of Mexico, stipulating at the same time that British subjects dwelling in its territories should enjoy the rights which had been granted to them by Spain in the treaty of 1786; and thus reaffirmed and re-established her own exclusion from Central America, with the exceptions and limitations Having shown that there can be lawfully no Mosquito Kingdom or King, I need not prove that there can lawfully be no British Protectorate of Although it is superfluous, I will now show secondly, that, in fact, there is no such Kingdom, King, or Protectorate. In Central America, popu-

lation, civilization, and government, ever since Honduras, in the Caribbean Sea, about thirtythe period of Spanish discovery, have clustered on the high grounds inland and on the Pacific slope, leaving the coast of the Caribbean Sea, about thirty-five miles from the port of Truxillo, in the State of Honduras, and four hundred miles distant from the Balize, lies the island of Ruatan, spacious, fertile, beautiful, and easily susceptible of defence. Near to it are the relatively smaller, but yet considerable islands of Ropacca Utilla Barbetween the regions, that the early visiting describe the colony as situated between heaven and hell. That coast, including the Mosquito shore, still remains "a haunt of savages, whom three hundred years of contact with European civilization has not only failed to improve, but actually degraded and debased." Among them see the Mosquitoes, the most degraded and debased of all. They are a mixed breed of Indians and new Gibraltar. On the 17th of July, 1850, thirteen all. They are a mixed breed of Indians and ne-groes, in number about 6,000. They habisist chiefly by fishing and hunting, and live in the banks of the lagoons on the verge of the coast, ment, constituting the islands before named a

> ands in that place, but they are expressly described and assigned to the Balize, in the treaty no pretence of title, or even of continued occu-pancy of them. Spain held them until the revolution in Central America. The State of Honduras assumed possession, and placed a flag on Ruatan, in 1829. Great Britain caused that flag to be supplanted by her own in 1839; but this was immediately afterwards lowered, and the flag of Honduras was restored to its place. It is unimportant to follow this petty contention farther. Whatever pretensions Great Britain may have ever before made to the Bay Islands, they were all solemnly and forever relinquished and abandoned by her in the treaty of 1850.

eports, the British House of Commons laughed when (he being present in 1849) they voted the appropriations to support the Chargé d'Affaires at the Court of that imaginary monarch. If any substance remained in the fictions of a Mosquito Nation and Protectorate, it was finally ed the protection and defence of the Mosquito First, Spain, instead of exercising absolute sover-eignty over Central America, and prohibiting all tirely lost her domain over the Continent, from Cape Horn to Florida. Secondly, the Mosquito Indians, instead of governing their own tribe, according to their own customs, furnisl. a name and title to Europeans and Americans, who carry on trade at Greytown, and along the coast of Mosquito, according to the usages of civilized nations. Thirdly, Great Britain, instead of having an interest in the defence of the Mosquito Indians, for the sake of rescuing part of the territory of Central America from Spanish control,

Under no circumstances could the fiction of a Mosquito King, Kingdom, or Protectorate, be tolerated, to deprive the United States of continental rights guarantied to them by treaties with the Central American States. But it would be consenting to the practice of a fraud against them and ourselves to tolerate such efforts after the Lord Clarendon claims that the late Mr. Web- of those nations to govern themselves. The decline of European power here practically began ster, when Secretary of State, sanctioned the cline of European power here practically began British construction of the treaty of 1850. This with the fall of Canada out of the control of France, in 1763. It has steadily continued until now only some relics, possessing little vitality

promise, which failed. But however solemn may have been his approval of the British construction, it has never been adopted by the United States,

Mr. Webster's supposed admission against the ter admission of Lord John Russell, in the letter from which I have quoted so largely already:

The peculiarity of this case is, that certain
neighboring States deny altogether the independence of Mosquito; and the Mosquito fiation are liable any day to new incursions upon their territory. We can make no complete provision against this danger. Our policy is, to do all that honor and humanity require in behalf of the Mosquito nation, but we intend to adhere steadily to the treaty of Washington of the 19th of April, 1850, and not to assume any sovereignty, either direct or indirect, in Central America."

olice, no industry, no trade, no intercourse

There are indeed, at Blewfield, civil, judicial,

diplomatic, military, and naval authorities; but all these are British; they execute only British

orders, and derive all their powers and salaries

from the British Government. These doubtless are the reasons why Lord Palmerston, in speak-

ing of the Mosquito King, said, "he is as much a King as you or I," and why, as Mr. Bancroft

lissolved by the frank and manly statements

e Congress of the United States. "It is eviden

(he writes) that since Great Britain first assum-

ndians, the position of all parties has changed.

nmerce on the coast under her sway, has en-

and obtaining an outlet for her, has no other in-

terest in Mosquito than that which is derived

from an honorable regard for her old connection

with the Indian nation at Mosquito."

treaties of 1783, 1786, and 1850.

So much light has now been thrown upon the whole field of debate, that I can discose very briefly of the two remaining question. I proceed to speak of the Balize. Simultaneously with the ratification of the treaty of 1856 explanations passed between the negotiators, which excepted from its operation "the British settlement in Honduras, (commonly called British Honduras, as distinct from the State of Hond'aras,) and the small islands in the neighborhood of that settlement, which may be known as its dependencies;" and it was declared that "the title to that settlement and those islands was left by the treaty, without denying or affirming or meddling

in any way with the same." Great Britain now insists on the Sarstoon River, (which is far south of the Sibun,) as the border of the British settlement of the Balize, while, by the treaty of 1786, the Sibun is expressly defined as its proper boudary; and she nsists, moreover, on exclusive sovereignty over that district, while, by that treaty, her possession is merely a subordinate one, without any attribute of dominion whatever. By this extended and absolute occupation, Great Britain covers a proposed passage across the Isthmus, through the State of Honduras, and also has great power to obstruct even the Nicaragua route. The United States, in view of the exception of the Balize district from the treaty of 1850, do not insist now. on her abandoning the Balize, but they insist that she shall withdraw from the district she has usurped, lying between the Sibun and the Sarstoon, and confine herself within the stipulated boundaries of the Balize, while they are content to leave for further discussion the examination of

Lord Clarendon sustains the British claim by lrawing in the fact that the United States, in 1841, sent a Consul to reside at the Balize, who received his exequatur from the British Govern-ment. But Balize is situated north of the Sibun, and within the proper limits of British Honduras. The act of sending a Consul to reside there is no acknowledgment of the lawfulness of the extension of the settlement beyond those boundaries. Secondly, the appointment of a Consul is only a

inactivity. ges across the Isthmus arose. In 1817, the British Continental supremacy, must at once render itself Parliament passed a law, entitled, "In act for the more effectual punishment of mu ders and pose California and Oregon to the hazards of a manslaughters, committed in places the within his Majesty's dominions." The prearble is in must at least begin what has been too long dethese words: "Whereas grievous mu ders and layed already, the construction of railroads from manslaughters have been committed it the set- the Western borders of the Mississippi States to tiement in the Bay of Honduras, in South Ameri- our ports on the Pacific. Although the control ca, the same bay or settlement being for certain purposes in the possession and within the protection of his Majesty, but not within the terri- lie north of the St. Lawrence. Canada canno tory and dominion of His Majesty, by persons be conquered against her will. She cannot re-residing within that settlement." Parliament fuse, if you tender her annexation on just terms, amended this statute, in 1819, by another, which with indemnity for the struggle she may expect re-affirmed that Balize was not within the terri- with Great Britain.

occupying no other part of the extensive estrict overed in their name by the Protectorate. Their cloud is taited, and they are diminishing it numbers like the color.

shall discontinue this new Colony. Great Britain bers, like the natives of the Sandwich Isla'ds.

The British have built a town, named Blewfield, at the mouth of the Blewfield River, which contains 600 inhabitants, of whom 500 are Indians and Negroes, and 100 are English. Nearly all the dwellings are mere huts; but there is one house which is built of boards, and in this 1786, while the Bay Islands are neither small islands, nor are they situated in the neighbor-hood of the Balize, but, on the contrary, they are islands of considerable magnitude and of historic importance. The treaty of 1786 assigns them to the "Spanish Continent," and expressly excludes Great Britain from them. Great Britain shows I have thus reached the conclusion that the

American positions are just, and the American with Gillies History of Greece. Sec.

demands are right. The final question is a practure of the Author, by Lord Jeffrey. Uniform with Gillies History of Greece. Sec. ical one-What ought the United States nov

I can now only glance at some of the circun stances which affect the question. I regret that t involves in any case a possibility of war. Although I believe war sometimes justifiable, I regard it always nevertheless as a calamity and an vil. I do not agree with either those who suppose it contributes to national prosperity, or those who regard it as a salutary discipline of States. should therefore deeply deplore any war with any nation, and, more than any other, a war with Great Britain. That Power no longer arms alone Its wealth and influence easily secure allies. No in such a contest should we be unaided. Th adjacent American States, at least, would co operate with us. It would therefore be a gene ral war, and, consequently, more extensively in-jurious and widely demoralizing than any other in which we could be engaged. It would moreover renew and practically perpetuate an alienaommon guidance (only secured through their oncord) the advancing nations largely depend I deprecate a war, moreover, because it can be avoided, unless there shall be fault on both sides. or on one side; and therefore in one sense i would be an unnecessary conflict. Notwithstand ing the occasional occurrence of misapprehen-sions and irritations, the world is yet wide enough for both nations, and for all nations. We are the centre of one system, an American one; Great Britain is the centre of another, an European one. Almost in spite of ourselves, we are steadily extending and increasing our control over these continents. Notwithstanding her tena-city, she is constantly losing her dominion here. This is within the order of Nature. It was for three hundred years the business o European nations to colonize, discipline, and educate American nations. It is now the business

Britain will wisely withdraw and disappear from this hemisphere within a quarter of a centuryat least, within half a century. War might has ten, but might also delay it.
I regret, also, that a war, if it must come, mus also probably concur with the great conflict tha now convulses Europe. The British Administra tion has long been unfaithful to the cause of Free Institutions in Europe, and the French En pire is, in my eyes, a hateful usurpation. Never the pour of these Administration will be Russian rary, and practically ephemeral, while the Russian Empire is an obstinate and portentous reality. accept the oracular exposition of the first Napo-leon; and, believing that Europe must be soon either Republican or Cossack, I recognise, beneath the monarchical masks of the allies, the Western Nations contending against an advancing despotism. Although no duty and no propriety re-

nation against them. I regret, also, the sad condition of the Central American States, which seems to render them as incapable of profiting by our intervention as the French people were, when, in 1799, they demanded a like interposition, in fulfilment of our precedent treaties of commerce and alliance. Nevertheless, a war with Great Britain is no among the possible solutions of the present embarrassment. We certainly can look for no mod

eration on her part hereafter if we overlook he

persistent refusal to fulfil this, the most solem

quires us to intervene on their side, I should be

very unwilling to engage my country in a combi-

and important of all our international engage ments. It will be an idle dream to suppose selves free and safe, if we leave her to waylay us on all sides of all our Isthmus passages from our Atlantic region to the Pacific States. Nor do I fear a war, having justice and high State necessity on our side. We outnumber the population of the British Islands. Their dependncies detract from instead of lending strength Although we have less realized wealth, we have infinitely greater resources than those of Great Britain; and our revenues, susceptible of large increase, are practically free. Our recruiting ground is ample, as Great Britain well knows were any deficiency of native volunteers, Great Britain herself, as well as other European nations, has supplied us with this element of war.

have a corps of military officers unequalled, and we have the foundations of an effective navy, that can speedily be built up and put in motion In view of the circumstances, it seems to me wise to adhere to our demands, and yet to cast on Great Britain distinctly the responsibility of deciding upon peace or war. Some would advise us to propose arbitration. But I think we have passed that point already. It would imply doubt of the rightfulness of the positions on which we have elected to stand, as claimants out of possession. Such indecision would be equivalent to abandonment. Besides, I do not know where we could find an impartial umpire in the present disturbed condition of Europe. I do not think that Great Britain will choo

a resort to war. Her Government, hardly less than our own, is a popular one. This contro versy grows out of a caprice of her own Administration. A war would embarrass her prosper-ous industrial system, and could bring to he in return no adequate advantage, even if she were successful. My counsel, therefore, is a notice to Great Britain that we shall interfere to prevent her exercise of dominion in South America, if it shall not be discontinued within one year, and also that authority be now given to the President to execute that delayed purpose. Great Britain may reconsider-may propose to

us a reference, or some other amicable ment. I would be ready to hear, and to go to the very verge of accommodation. But this disposition I think ought not to persuade us to If the wisdom of Congress shall approve this course, then the intervening time can be well and wisely improved. No sagacious nation will ever

hazard all its foreign dominion or influence, or the integrity of its territory, without bringing all its power into exercise. A nation that strikes for

re-affirmed that Balize was not within the tories and dominions of Great Britain. I have tories and dominions of Great Britain. I have already shown that, in 1826, Great Britain, in recognising the independence of Mexico, stipulated for her settlement at the Balize the privileges granted by the treaty with Spain, of 1786. Such is the unanswerable argument for the American position in regard to the Balize.

It remains now to speak of the Colony of the Ray Islands. In Central America, not in British Ray Islands. In Central Ray Islands Ray Islands Ray Islands Ray Islands Ray Islands Ray Islands Ray Isl

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